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Sustainable development: protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind

Report of the Second Committee*

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I. Introduction

1. The Second Committee held a substantive debate on agenda item 20 (see A/67/437, para. 2). Action on sub-item (d) was taken at the 29th and 31st meetings, on 14 and 28 November 2012. An account of the Committee's consideration of the sub-item is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.2/67/SR.29 and 31).

II. Consideration of draft resolutions A/C.2/67/L.20 and A/C.2/67/L.43

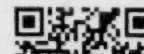
2. At the 29th meeting, on 14 November, the representative of Algeria, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind" (A/C.2/67/L.20), which read:

"The General Assembly,

"Recalling its resolutions 43/53 of 6 December 1988, 54/222 of 22 December 1999, 62/86 of 10 December 2007, 63/32 of 26 November 2008, 64/73 of 7 December 2009 and 66/200 of 22 December 2011 and other resolutions and decisions relating to the protection of the global climate for present and future generations of humankind,

"Recalling also the principles and provisions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, including the acknowledgement that the global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible

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cooperation by all countries and their participation in an effective and appropriate international response, with a view to accelerating the reduction of global greenhouse gas emissions, on the basis of equity and in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities,

"Recalling further the United Nations Millennium Declaration, the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ('Johannesburg Plan of Implementation'), the 2005 World Summit Outcome, the outcome of the thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention and of the third session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, held in Bali, Indonesia, from 3 to 15 December 2007, and the outcomes of all the sessions, the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, the Mauritius Declaration and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, the political declaration on Africa's development needs and the New Partnership for Africa's Development and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020, adopted at the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held in Istanbul, Turkey, from 9 to 13 May 2011,

"Recalling the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development of 2012, entitled 'The future we want',

"Reaffirming its commitment to the ultimate objective of the Convention, namely, to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that prevents dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system, and also reaffirming that such a level should be achieved within a time frame sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change, to ensure that food production is not threatened and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner,

"Reaffirming the financial obligations of developed country parties and other developed parties included in annex II to the Convention under the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol,

"1. Takes note of the outcome of the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and of the seventh session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, hosted in Durban, South Africa, by the Government of South Africa from 28 November to 11 December 2011;

"2. Recognizes the need to build on the existing political momentum with a view to achieving the ultimate objective of the Convention through the urgent implementation of its provisions;

"3. Takes note of the report of the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change on the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Durban and its follow-up;

"4. *Reaffirms* that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is the primary international, intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change;

"5. *Stresses* that the international community, particularly the developed countries, given their historical responsibility, needs to take the lead in addressing this challenge within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and in accordance with its principles and provisions, in particular the principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, and provide financial and technological support to developing countries;

"6. *Underlines* the importance of achieving an ambitious, substantive, holistic and balanced outcome through the ongoing negotiations at the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol;

"7. *Notes with appreciation* that the Government of Qatar will host the eighteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and the eighth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol in Doha from 26 November to 7 December 2012;

"8. *Encourages* Member States to approach the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Doha with optimism and determination, with a view to achieving the full implementation of the outcome of the Conference held in Durban;

"9. *Emphasizes* that a legally binding second commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol is critical and must be the key deliverable of the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Doha, and that its goals must be ambitious in terms of emission reductions and that it shall begin on 1 January 2013 in order to avoid any gap between the first and the second commitment periods;

"10. *Reaffirms* the need to reach a successful and comprehensive outcome at the United Nations Conference on Climate Change in Doha, and stresses the importance of the full implementation of the delicate package endorsed by the United Nations Conference on Climate Change in Durban in all its aspects, including the achievement of a high quality, legal second commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol, as well as the successful conclusion of the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention, in line with the Bali Action Plan and the substantive progress made in the Cancun and Durban decisions, incorporating comparable ambitious targets for parties not included in annex I to the Kyoto Protocol, and addressing in a balanced and effective manner the issues of adaptation, mitigation, finance, technology and capacity-building;

"11. *Calls upon* all parties to preserve the architecture of the Convention, cautions against any attempt to renegotiate or interpret the Convention or its principles, and stresses that the negotiations under the Convention should not unravel the existing climate change architecture from binding obligations to a 'pledge and review' approach for annex I parties;

"12. *Emphasizes* that progress in the Durban Platform is critical for taking the Convention forward, but that work must ensure a strong linkage between mitigation, adaptation and means of implementation, in a balanced manner, as reflected in the Convention, and underlines that all tracks under the Convention must progress in an expeditious, ambitious and effective manner and that such progress should reflect the linkages between mitigation, adaptation and means of implementation that are embedded in the Convention;

"13. *Calls upon* all annex I parties to fulfil their commitments relating to mitigation, adaptation, finance, technology transfer and capacity-building under the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol;

"14. *Invites* the secretariat of the Convention to report, through the Secretary-General, to the General Assembly at its sixty-eighth session on the work of the Conference of the Parties;

"15. *Requests* the Secretary-General to make provisions for the sessions of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and its subsidiary bodies in his proposal for the programme budget for the biennium 2013-2014;

"16. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-eighth session, under the item entitled 'Sustainable development', the sub-item entitled 'Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind'."

3. At its 31st meeting, on 28 November, the Committee had before it a draft resolution entitled "Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind" (A/C.2/67/L.43), submitted by the Rapporteur on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/67/L.20.

4. At the same meeting, the Committee was informed that draft resolution A/C.2/67/L.43 had no programme budget implications.

5. Also at the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/67/L.43 (see para. 8).

6. Following the adoption of the draft resolution, statements were made by the representatives of Mexico and the United States of America (see A/C.2/67/SR.31).

7. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/67/L.43, draft resolution A/C.2/67/L.20 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

III. Recommendation of the Second Committee

8. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 43/53 of 6 December 1988, 54/222 of 22 December 1999, 62/86 of 10 December 2007, 63/32 of 26 November 2008, 64/73 of 7 December 2009, 65/159 of 20 December 2010 and 66/200 of 22 December 2011 and other resolutions and decisions relating to the protection of the global climate for present and future generations of humankind,

Recalling also the provisions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,¹ including the acknowledgement that the global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible cooperation by all countries and their participation in an effective and appropriate international response, in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities and social and economic conditions,

Acknowledging that the developed country parties must take the lead in combating climate change and its adverse effects,

Recalling the United Nations Millennium Declaration,² the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development³ and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation"),⁴ the 2005 World Summit Outcome,⁵ the outcome of the thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention and of the third session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, held in Bali, Indonesia, from 3 to 15 December 2007,⁶ and the outcomes of all the sessions, the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,⁷ the Mauritius Declaration⁸ and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing

¹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

² Resolution 55/2.

³ *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

⁴ *Ibid.*, resolution 2, annex.

⁵ Resolution 60/1.

⁶ FCCC/CP/2007/6/Add.1 and 2 and FCCC/KP/CMP/2007/9/Add.1 and 2.

⁷ *Report of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown, Barbados, 25 April-6 May 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.I.18 and corrigenda), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

⁸ *Report of the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Port Louis, Mauritius, 10-14 January 2005* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.05.II.A.4 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

States,⁹ the political declaration on Africa's development needs¹⁰ and the New Partnership for Africa's Development¹¹ and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020, adopted at the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held in Istanbul, Turkey, from 9 to 13 May 2011,¹²

Recalling the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 20 to 22 June 2012, entitled "The future we want",¹³

Reaffirming its commitment to the ultimate objective of the Convention, namely, to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that prevents dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system, and also reaffirming that such a level should be achieved within a time frame sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change, to ensure that food production is not threatened and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner,

Reaffirming also the financial obligations of developed country parties and other developed parties included in annex II to the Convention under the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol,

Reaffirming further that the Convention has a key role in addressing climate change,

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the outcome of the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and of the seventh session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, hosted in Durban, South Africa, by the Government of South Africa from 28 November to 11 December 2011;¹⁴

2. *Reaffirms* that climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time, expresses profound alarm that the emission of greenhouse gases continues to rise globally, remains deeply concerned that all countries, particularly developing countries, are vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change and are already experiencing increased impacts, including persistent drought and extreme weather events, sea level rise, coastal erosion and ocean acidification, further threatening food security and efforts to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development, and in this regard emphasizes that adaptation to climate change represents an immediate and urgent global priority;

3. *Recognizes* the need to build on the existing political momentum with a view to achieving the ultimate objective of the Convention and to further advancing climate change negotiations;

⁹ Ibid., annex II.

¹⁰ Resolution 63/1.

¹¹ Resolution 57/2.

¹² *Report of the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, Istanbul, Turkey, 9-13 May 2011* (United Nations publication, Sales No. 11.II.A.1), chap. II.

¹³ Resolution 66/288, annex.

¹⁴ FCCC/CP/2011/9/Add.1 and 2 and FCCC/KP/CMP/2011/10/Add.1 and 2.